



## GRISELINIA

Maori name: Kapuka / Papauma  
Common name: Broadleaf f  
Botanical name: *Griselinia littoralis*

### What does it look like?

Griselinia grows to a medium sized tree of 10 metres or more, and is usually recognised by the short, gnarled trunk with rough furrowed bark. It often grows as a many-stemmed shrub, rather than from a single trunk. It's leathery, bright green leaves are more or less oval and wavy in appearance. The tiny green and yellow flowers are a good source of pollen for bees in the spring. In the autumn, the female trees have small, purple-black fruit.

### Where does it grow?

Common nearly everywhere in New Zealand from sea level to 1000 metres, *Griselinia* is not, however, found naturally north of the Bay of Islands. It is particularly abundant in the South Island, where it often starts life as an epiphyte, growing on old fallen logs. It can grow in a wide range of soil types and situations and is particularly tolerant of frost and persistent wind. It will not grow so well on very infertile soils, or in prolonged drought conditions. It is useful in coastal situations (*littoralis* means 'shore growing'), and can withstand heavy pruning.

### Growing tips - in your plant growing unit

*Griselinia* will not need to be potted on from the root trainers. Keep the plants trimmed to 30 - 50 cm in height. It is easy to raise *Griselinia* from seed. The ripe blue-black berries are collected in summer-autumn and should be sown immediately. Semi-hardwood cuttings will also grow quite easily.

### Planting out for Soil Conservation

Because it is so tolerant of strong winds and salt spray, *Griselinia* is especially useful for planting to provide shelter to minimise coastal wind erosion. It is also useful for revegetating soil erosion scars because it is quick to establish. It will need to be well protected from grazing animals and possums, which enjoy eating its lush leaves.

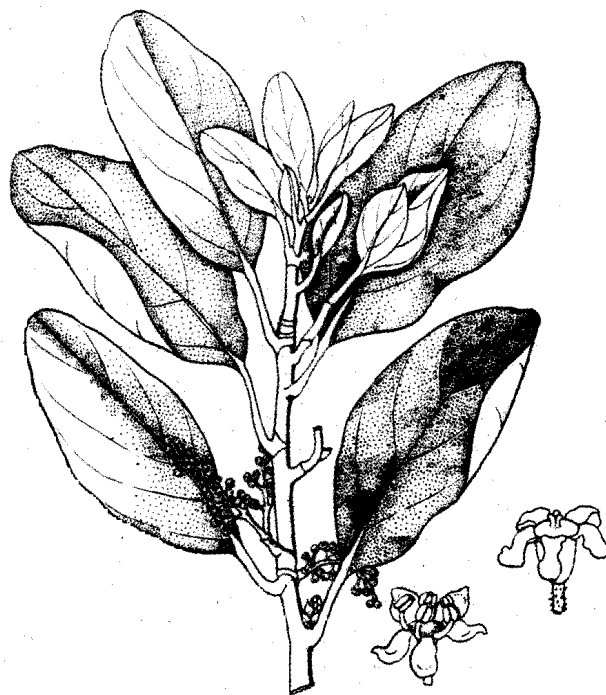
### Used To ....

*Griselinia*'s red timber is dense, strong and very durable. It has been used for fence posts, house piles and boat building, although the fact that it rarely has a straight length of trunk has frustrated many timber workers.

In times of food shortage, early Maori ate the tiny ripe berries, although they taste bitter. The inner bark was used as a remedy for certain types of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases.

### Did you know?

If you come across a mature *Griselinia* - treat it with respect. It has a life span of at least a hundred years, so it will have seen many changes in the countryside.



Picture from Lindsay Poole and Nancy Adams, 1990, *Trees and Shrubs of New Zealand*, DSIR Publishing.

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